

Message Text

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ACTION SS-25

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AMEMBASSY LONDON IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY LUSAKA
AMEMBASSY MAPUTO
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AMEMBASSY IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY PARIS IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY PRETORIA
AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM
AMEMBASSY ROME IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L LAGOS 1212

EXDIS

VALLETTA FOR YOUNG AND MOOSE

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PORG SF WA UN
SUBJECT: NAMIBIA: PREPARING SWAPO FOR PROXIMITY TALKS APPROACH
TO ANGOLA

REF: (A) STATE 20710; (B) LAGOS 01116; (C) STATE 023830

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1. AS WE ARE REMOVED FROM THE SECENE AND RELATIVELY UNFAMILIAR
WITH SWAPO PERSONALITIES, POSITIONS AND POLITICS WE ARE RELUCTANT
TO PROPOSE NEGOTIATING POSITIONS TO BE USED WITH SWAPO. WE
WOULD PREFER TO CONFINE OURSELVES TO ADDRESSING THE ROLE
NIGERIA CAN PLAY IN REALIZING OUR OBJECTIVES. SEE PARAGRAPH
EIGHT BELOW FOR SUGGESTIONS ON MAKING AN APPROACH IN LUANDA,
WHICH STRIEKS US AS WORTH A TRY.

2. NIGERIA UP TO THIS POINT HAS SUPPORTED THE WESTERN FIVE IN THEIR INITIATIVE IN NAMIBIA AND THE UK/US PROPOSALS FOR RHODESIA. WHEN CALLED UPON, THEY HAVE PRESSED THE FRONT LINE STATES AND NATIONALIST GROUPS INVOLVED TO BE MORE COOPERATIVE AND FLEXIBLE. THEY ARE DEEPLY DISTURBED AT THE MOMENT, HOWEVER, BY THE NEWS OF AN IMMINENT INTERNAL SETTLEMENT IN RHODESIA AND ARE CONVINCED THAT A NUMBER OF COUNTRIES, INCLUDING SOME OF THE MORE CONSERVATIVE AFRICAN NATIONS, WILL IN SHORT TIME RECOGNIZE A DE FACTO REGIME EMERGING FROM THE SETTLEMENT (REFTEL B). THEY SEE MAJOR HURDLES IN REACHING AGREEMENT IN NAMIBIA. MEA AFRICA DEPARTMENT DIRECTOR AKADIRI APPEARED IN DISCUSSIONS WITH THE AMBASSADOR TO SUPPORT SWAPO'S POSITION ON AMNESTY FOR POLITICAL PRISONERS AND HE LIMITED HIS CRITICISM OF SWAPO OBSTINACY TO THE REMARK THAT SWAPO SHOULD BE FLEXIBLE ENOUGH TO ALLOW SAG TO "SAVE FACE". THIS IMPLIES TO US THAT NIGERIA WOULD URGE ONLY MINIMAL CONCESSIONS ON THE PART OF SWAPO.

3. THERE ARE IN FACT INDICATIONS THAT THE NIGERIANS MAY BE IN THE PROCESS OF REEVALUATING THEIR OWN FOREIGN POLICY IN THESE AREAS, IF ONLY FOR THE PURPOSE OF PREPARING THE NIGERIAN PUBLIC FOR SEVERE DISAPPOINTMENTS. THIS HAS BEEN SUGGESTED IN RECENT DISCUSSION WITH AKADIRI (REFTEL B) AND, DURING THE PAST WEEK, IN TWO SPEECHES BY PROMINENT NIGERIANS. MEA COMMISSIONER GARBA, IN A SPEECH BEFORE THE CONFIDENTIAL

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SECURITY COUNCIL ON JANUARY 26 THAT WAS DESCRIBED BY USUN AS "SURPRISINGLY HOSTILE," REFERRED TO THE "GLARING INADEQUACIES" OF THE ANGLO-AMERICAN PLAN, EVIDENCED CONSIDERABLE SUSPICION OF WESTERN OBJECTIVES IN RHODESIA AND IMPLIED THE WEST HAD BEEN USING THE EXCUSE OF THE MALTA TALKS TO BLOCK COUNCIL ACTION ON RHODESIA. (USUN 255)

4. IN A LECTURE DELIVERED AT THE UNIVERSITY OF ILORIN ON JANUARY 24, 1978, NIGERIAN INSTITUTE OF INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS DIRECTOR-GENERAL AKINYEMI BEGAN BY STATING THAT "NIGERIAN INVOLVEMENT IN INTERNATIONAL POLITICS IS AT A CRITICAL JUNCTURE." AFTER DISCUSSING THE EFFECT ON NIGERIAN FOREIGN POLICY OF NIGERIA'S ECONOMIC DEPENDENCE ON CERTAIN INDUSTRIALIZED COUNTRIES (PARTICULARLY THE UNITED STATES), AKINYEMI TURNED TO NIGERIA'S SOUTHERN AFRICA POLICY, SAYING "THERE IS NO DOUBT THAT THE TEMPO OF DIPLOMATIC ACTIVITIES BETWEEN THE UNITED STATES AND NIGERIA IS A RESULT OF THE ASSESSMENT THAT THE PRESENT UNITED STATES ADMINISTRATION INTENDS TO PRODUCE DESIRABLE CHANGES IN ZIMBABWE, NAMIBIA AND SOUTH AFRICA. SHOULD THESE CHANGES NOT MATERIALIZE, THE RELATIONSHIP COULD EASILY RETURN TO A LUKE-WARMNESS THAT IS JUST SLIGHTLY BETTER THAN WHAT EXISTED

WHEN PRESIDENTS NIXON AND FORD WERE IN OFFICE."

5. WHAT DOES THIS MEAN IN TERMS OF ENLISTING NIGERIA'S ASSISTANCE IN REALIZING OUR OBJECTIVES ON NAMIBIA? IT SUGGESTS THAT WE CANNOT TAKE NIGERIAN COOPERATION FOR GRANTED, ESPECIALLY IF NIGERIA DISCERNS THAT THE SAG DOES NOT INTEND TO MOVE FAR FROM ITS PRESENT POSITION. WHEN AKADIRI WAS BRIEFED BY THE AMBASSADOR ON THE PROXIMITY MEETINGS, HIS REACTION TO HEARING THAT THEY WOULD BE HELD AT THE FOREIGN MMINISTER LEVEL WAS THAT EVIDENTLY A GREAT DEAL OF PROGRESS HAD BEEN MADE. IF IT SOON BECOMES EVIDENT THAT IS NOT SO, THE NIGERIANS MAY WELL SEEK WAYS TO DISSOCIATE THEMSELVES FROM FAILURE.

6. WE THEREFORE BELIEVE WE SHOULD ENGAGE AKADIRI IN AN CONFIDENTIAL

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EARLY THOROUGH REVIEW OF OUR POSITION ON THE NAMBIA PROXIMITY TALKS. IN THIS CONNECTION WE WOULD APPRECIATE RECEIVING TALKING POINTS, PARTICULARLY ON THOSE ISSUES ON WHICH WE WOULD HO E NIGERIANS WKULD SEEK TO INFLUENCE SWAPO, BEFORE THE PROXIMITY TALKS BEGIN. IN ADDITION, WE PROPOSE TO EXPLORE REFTEL QUESTIONS WITH AKADIRI, ALTHOUGH WE ARE NOT CONFIDENT THE FMG IS WELL ENOUGH INFORMED TO GIVE US USEFUL ANSWERS. WE WOULD LIKE TO GIVE FMG THE CG PROPOSALS FOR NAMIBIA AT THE SAME TIME THEY ARE GIVEN TO THE FL PRESIDENTS.

7. DR. FAFOWARA, DEPUTY DIRECTOR AFRICA DEPARTMENT, IS PLANNING TO OBSEVE THE PROXIMITY TALKS IN NEW YORK. WE WILL TRY TO SEE THAT HE ATTENDS OUR BRIEFING OF AKADIRI. WE ASSUME THAT USUN WILL BE BRIEFING HARRIMAN.

8. FROM OUR VANTAGE POINT HERE (ADMITTEDLY A SOMEWHAT LIMITED ONE), AN APPROACH TO ANGOLA APPEARS WORTH A TRY. WITH REGARD TO REFTEL C OPTIONS ON HOW TO DO IT, AMBASSADOR EASUM WOULD BE PLEASED PARTICIPATE IN A GROUP SENT FROM HERE. (NETO AND PAULO JORGE BOTH KNOW HIM.) NIGERIA AIRWAYS CURRENTLY FLIES DOWN ON SATURDAYS (ONE STOP, LIBREVILLE) AND FLIES BACK NON-STOP ON SUNDAYSM MEA COULD BE EXPECTED TO FACILITATE WITH AIRLINES AND INSTRUCT AMBASSADOR MSUA IN LUANADA TO BE HELPFUL. THIS WEEKEND (FEBRUARY 4) MAY BE TOO LATE, HOWEVER. AMBASSADOR EASUM WOULD ALSO WILLINGLY CARRY MCHENRY'S BRIEFCASE FOR HIM SHOULD MCHENRY MAKE THE TRIP HIMSELF. STILL ANOTHER OPTION WOULD BE UTILIZE ITALIAN AMBASSADOR IN LUANDA. HE IS REPORTEDLY BETTER SUITED TO SUCH A ROLE THAN HIS FRENCH COUNTERPART, AND WE UNDERSTAND ITALIAN FOREIGN MINISTRY (UNDER SECRETARY RADI IN PARTICULAR) WOULD LIKE TO BE HELPFUL ON NAMBIA. YOU MAY WISH SOLICIT EMBASSY ROME'S VIEWS IF THIS OPTION IS ATTRACTIVE. EASUM

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